

Montana Drought Summary

April 15, 2002

next issuance: Wednesday, May 1.

Montana precipitation summary, April 1-14.

East of the Continental Divide, precipitation was below normal for the period. The most widespread event for the region occurred on the 1st. A system moved out of Alberta, dropping an area of snow on central Montana, with around 0.10 inches of water equivalent recorded in the lower elevations. Between the 2nd and the 14th, precipitation events were spotty. The southeast part of the state had scattered showers and a few thunderstorms on the 10th with areas getting more than a tenth of an inch of rain. A large area of thunderstorms affected the southwest on the 14th, and some places received more than 0.20 inches of rain from this event.

West of the Continental Divide, precipitation was above normal. This region was also hit with some snow on the 1st. A dry period occurred between the 2nd and the 4th, but moist upslope winds persisted for most of the period between the 5th and 14th, bringing periods of rain and snow. Some places received over a half inch of liquid on the 13th through the 14th as a Pacific system moved into the area.

**Historical Rank of Precipitation (inches)
for the Past Month and Water Year to Date**

Location	March 15 - April 14	Rank as driest	October 1 - April 14	Rank as driest	Years on Record
Cut Bank	0.25	24th	0.84	1st	83
Bozeman	0.68	13th	3.93	16th	50
Great Falls	0.56	28th	2.28	2nd	109
Helena	0.62	37th	2.24	9th	109
Missoula	1.04	35th	6.51	34th	50
Kalispell	1.26	73rd	5.38	11th	101
Glasgow	0.41	38th	1.59	5th	98
Billings	0.23	4th	2.23	1st	54
Miles City	0.62	25th	1.46	2nd	65

For an automated version of this chart, updated daily, go to
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/greatfalls/getproduct.pl?PCPNTOTALS>

For a state map of % of normal water year precip (updated around the 7th of each month), go to
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/tfx.php?TEXT+wateryear_percent.html

For the latest information on mountain snowpack from the NRCS, go to
http://nris.state.mt.us/nrcs/Apr02/04_02swehuc.pdf

For the latest streamflow forecasts from the NRCS, go to
http://nris.state.mt.us/nrcs/Apr02/04_02stfp.pdf

Montana precipitation forecast.

As of April 14, the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) forecasts near normal precipitation across Montana for the period April 22 to April 28. The next 30 and 90 day outlooks will be issued by CPC on April 18th. Graphics and text relating to these outlooks can be found at
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/multi_season/13_seasonal_outlooks/color/seasonal_forecast.html

El Niño may be developing in the equatorial waters off of South America. A moderate to strong El Niño usually causes a drier than normal period in Montana, especially during the Winter. For the latest details on El Niño, go to http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory

The Montana Drought Summary is produced by the National Weather Service Office in Great Falls, Montana, and is updated twice a month. This document is posted on the internet at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/drought0415.pdf>. Any further inquiries about the drought can be directed to WFO Great Falls at (406) 453-2081. Many more links can be found on the Drought Information Page of the NWS Great Falls web site at
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Greatfalls/tfx.php?HTML+drought>.